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S P E E C H

OF

LORD CAMPBELL,

IN THE

HOUSE OF LORDS,

ON THE

RIGHT OF THE NEUTRAL POWERS TO ACKNOWLEDGE
THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY,

MARCH 23RD, 1863.



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SPEECH OF LORD CAMPBELL.

LORD CAMPBELL, in rising to call attention to the question of acknowledging the Southern Confederacy as an independent Power, in concert with other neutral States, and to the Despatches of Mr. Mason, the Southern Envoy, on the subject, said: My Lords, although I know that no apology is requisite for calling the attention of the House to the papers for which I moved in August last, and which have lately been presented, I am anxious and impatient to point out the exact view with which the Motion is submitted to you. It is not in order to raise a question on the course which Government have taken as regards American affairs during the autumn. The question I propose is wholly seated in the future. The facts which lead to it are known and easy to recall to you. During the whole of the last Session, France and Great Britain were alleged, and were believed, to act together on the difficulties which the civil war gave rise to. Since then, they have diverged, or rather in the memorable phrase of a noble Friend, now absent from his place,* although their objects are the same, have seemed to drift from one another. In November, we restrained the French Government in a course which they desired to take; in January, the Emperor by himself pursued a second line of action, meant, like the first, to terminate hostilities. That line of action having failed, all thoughts of intervention, mediation, and remonstrance being exploded by the insolent reply of Mr. Seward: the Emperor being anxious still to close the war, as he has proved himself,

* The Earl of Clarendon.

and having paid to the Government of Washington, every debt of justice and of courtesy: the question of recognising the insurgent may at any moment come before us, as the question of attempting to obtain an armistice was urged upon the country in November. Were it not that, for some weeks past, Poland has engaged the world, before now it might have reached us. As things stand, it would find us in the worst condition to receive it, without conviction one way or the other, in either party of the State by the avowal of their leaders.* A fatal error might arise, not from a mistaken but an hesitating judgment. It is at such a moment, if ever, that Parliamentary debate is useful and admissible; when of two opposite opinions on a question rapidly impending, neither can be said to prevail over the other, and no man on earth foresees by which our conduct will be guided. It is, therefore, to contribute to a practical result, that I have given noble Lords the opportunity of speaking on America. And it could not have been done in any other form, because a Resolution or Address to pledge the action of the Government would have justly been resisted; and its withdrawal or defeat would prejudice the 8,000,000 men whose claims are now before you.

The opinion I am anxious to maintain is, that the divergence of France and Great Britain on America, ought not to go further, but to cease; and that when France invites us to acknowledge Southern independence, we should neither hold her back, nor let her move alone, but on the contrary, act with her. And by acknowledgment, I mean the course of sending an Ambassador to the insurgent, or of receiving his Ambassador, or of engaging in a treaty with him, or of seeking *exequaturs* from him for the consuls in his territory.

* See Speech of Lord Derby in the House of Lords, February 5th, and various addresses out of doors, during the autumn, by different Members of the Cabinet.

The first impression I should wish to combat very briefly is, that the acknowledgment by neutral States of Southern independence would have no practical effects, and no important consequences. It seemed to be that of a noble Earl over the way, who lately held the Foreign seals, at the beginning of the Session.* But if acknowledgment is wholly immaterial, why has the South continued to demand, and the North so long and pertinaciously endeavoured to avert it? Why are Southern Envoys now in London and in Paris, and why was the Government of Washington prepared at every cost, but that of war, to intercept them? Why have the Envoys, on arriving, made acknowledgment the simple object of their mission, and why has Mr. Seward sent to the different Powers a volume of despatches to resist it? It has reached me from credible authorities that last year the planters began to grow cotton when acknowledgment was looked for, and ploughed it in when the hope expired. It happened in this manner. The planters viewed acknowledgment as the road to peace, and were ready to invest their capital in the ordinary way when that road was likely to be opened. And it may well occur to them as having such a tendency. From the Northern mind it would take away the hope which lingers yet of Southern subjugation. From the Government of Washington it would take away the power of describing eleven communities contending for their liberty as rebels. The people of America are influenced by phrases, and will not come to terms with what they have been hounded on to look at as rebellion. But they can see a fact when Europe blazons it before them, and they may be awakened by her judgment to the nature of the foreign war on which their treasure and their happiness are wasted. When Europe has acknowledged it, the independence of the South may be

* Earl of Malmesbury.

debated in the Senate and the House, where no one now can venture to advert to it. A probable result of such a measure, if pursued by France, Great Britain, and other neutral States together, is, that it would weaken in the Executive at Washington its borrowing ability, because their loans are founded on the chances of re-conquest; and re-conquest would then appear what it is, a shadow and a dream. And it would do so with good reason. Victorious already, animated then, the Southern armies would be doubly irresistible.* They would not have, if they retain it now, the power to be vanquished. Another practical effect of recognition—the belligerents might then endeavour to negotiate, which it is clear they cannot do at present. A separate result would be to put an end to all the idle views of reconstruction and of union which are floating in America, and which serve to prolong the war, because they disincline the North to the only basis upon which the close of it is possible. A yet more serious result the measure promises is freedom to the Government of Washington from the necessity of hopeless war, which weighs on it at present. As soon as Europe sanctions its retreat, the greater portion of its evils are annihilated. As long as Europe sanctions its attempt, to renounce it is to suffer an indignity which never fell upon a State engaged in war with insurrection since modern history opened its varied scenes to our notice. Noble Lords who recollect how, after it had lasted forty years, the civil war between Spain and Holland was influenced in 1607-9 by the diplomacy of France and England, may be led to think in what form the present struggle might adjust itself. But they will also see that the efforts of the two Powers would have been as vain as they were brilliant and successful, unless Europe had before ac-

* An opinion founded upon conversations with Southern officers who had lately been in action.

knowledge the insurgent. I will not dwell upon the instance. It must engage the study of every Minister or Sovereign who aspires to the lofty task of closing the hostilities before us. And if I, wanting power to go on, should do nothing more than point to it to-night, the motion might not be a useless one.*

If noble Lords are not entirely satisfied as to the practical effects which recognition tends to, let me refer them to the despatch of Mr. Mason to the Secretary of State, dated August 1, in No. 2 of the papers lately given. He treats the point with that knowledge of the country, and the war itself, which must give weight to his expressions. The next doctrine, which stands in the way of the conclusion I am pointing to, is even more important to consider, because in this House it received a kind of sanction on February 5 from the noble Earl who leads the Opposition,† and who had the manliness to state that in espousing it he differed from the mass of his supporters. It has been laid down that you should recognise insurgent Powers only when you are going to give material assistance to their cause, or when the civil war is over ;—that neutrals should reserve their voice, until arms have fallen from the weak and fainting hands of the belligerents. Whether or not such ought to be the principle, it is not, as examples show, that on which the Powers of either world have generally acted. So far from the cessation of hostilities preceding the acknowledgment of neutrals, the acknowledgment of neutrals has, in nearly every case, preceded the cessation of hostilities. In combating this tenet, no doubt the cases of Belgium, under Lord Grey, Greece, under the Duke of Wellington, Holland under Queen Elizabeth, ought to be excluded, because in all three, material

* An adequate account of this remarkable transaction will be found in Watson's History of Philip III., Book iii., drawn from Bentivoglio and Grotius.

† The Earl of Derby.

support and diplomatic intercourse were blended. But the United States acknowledged Nicaragua, under Walker, before hostilities had ceased to menace the existence of his Government. They acknowledged the South American Republics rising against Spain before the effort to reduce them was exhausted. When Colonel Mann was sent by the Government of Washington to Hungary, in 1848-9, he was instructed to acknowledge the seceding kingdom, not when hostilities had ceased, but when its independence could be counted on ; and he reserved the voice he was invested with, not because he was controlled by the presence of Austrian troops, but by the chances—and he reasoned well—of the insurgents being reconquered.* He did not find a settled, but a migratory Government, which fled from post to post, instead of meeting the invaders at its capital. But if we pass to Europe, France acknowledged the United States revolting against England before Lord North renounced his efforts to subdue them. It is idle to assert that Lord North engaged in war on such a provocation. All who read the memorandum drawn up by Mr. Gibbon for the Government, and do not fancy themselves better versed than him in the opinions of the statesmen who instructed him, know that Lord North began war with France on a different provocation. And what if he did not? Is Lord North, after he had marred his reputation by a civil war, which all the men who formed the glory of that epoch denounced as wicked and demented, to be held up as a master of public law, and an oracle on international proceedings? Is the

* A statement, founded upon conversations with Colonel Mann, and wholly inconsistent with the common error that the United States did acknowledge Hungary. The illustration is one of acknowledgment judiciously withheld, and not of acknowledgment precipitately granted. It establishes the principle which had swayed the Cabinets of Washington, either in withholding or in granting it, as identical with that which is afterwards defended in the speech.

Minister of the day, no matter what may be his character, or what may be his errors, *virtute officii* an heir to the authority of Bynkershoek or Grotius? So much for France. Great Britain, it is said, upon the other hand, was tardy in acknowledging the South American republics. But that tardiness was reprobated by a brilliant and enlightened Opposition, of which the noble Lord the Secretary of State was not an inconsiderable ornament. And that tardiness was partially imposed by a generous regard for Spain, invaded as she was in 1823. It was justified, moreover, by the hazard of breaking with the great allies with whom, long after 1815, we had been acting, to whom, in 1823, France had become subservient, and who viewed the cause of the South American republics with aversion.* The noble Lord the President of the Council, well versed in the career of Mr. Canning, at that time the Foreign Secretary, cannot have forgotten, that in that particular transaction, to acknowledge the insurgents was to brave the greater portion of the world; that the despotic Powers made it almost a personal affair; that neither public law nor abstract rules, but special facts, and policy and prudence, at once delayed and fixed the hour of acknowledgment. The next and last example I shall give will make me independent of the others I have mentioned. It surpasses all the rest in magnitude and clearness; it tallies with the question now before the world in nearly every point, and it is one in which not a single State, but Europe may be said to have delivered—and that in times far more monarchical, and therefore more averse to revolution than our own—a judgment on the question of acknowledgment. Great Britain, France, Sweden, Holland, all formed treaties with Portugal, seceding from the rule of Spain in 1641, a year after the

* See "George Canning and His Times," by Mr. Stapleton, for a detailed account of the transaction founded upon Mr. Canning's letters.

Duke and Duchess of Braganza had proclaimed its independence, a quarter of a century before the Crown of Spain resolved to acquiesce in it.* At that time Prussia had not come into existence as a State. Russia had not begun to mingle in the politics of Europe.† Austria was attached to Spain by ties of family, and therefore the four recognising States may be fairly said to have composed a general tribunal of the Continent. So far from having ceased, the Spanish effort to reconquer by intrigue, conspiracies, and arms, went on till after 1665, with a variety of fortune. The Duchess of Braganza, who became Regent, and on whose fortitude and judgment the success of the insurgents hung—as indeed her spirit and ascendancy had been the mainspring of the enterprise‡ — employed the celebrated Schomberg as a general. Don John of Austria led the Spanish armies against Portugal. The Battle of Villa Vicoso took away at last the hopes of the invaders. The war lingered on. In 1668, Spain and Portugal negotiated peace with one another. Was Europe acting then, in 1641, against the principles which ought to have directed her? Is there anything in Grotius, Bynkershoek, Vattel, Von Martens, Wheaton, to condemn her? It was an obvious duty upon my part to examine all these writers on the question of acknowledgment. But it is not a duty to inflict quotations on your Lordships. The references are with me here, and they will be at the command of any Member who desires them.§ A

* See "History of Spain and Portugal," published by Society for Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

† In the endless dissertations of Sir W. Temple and Lord Bolingbroke on Foreign Policy, Russia is scarcely mentioned.

‡ See "Vertot on Portugal," almost a contemporary work, for an account of the Duchess of Braganza.

§ See Grotius, book ii., chap. 18. Bynkershoek, "Quæstiones Publici Juris," book ii., chap. 3. Wheaton, vol. i., page 96. Von Martens, page 79. Vattel, book iv., chap. 5, sec. 68.

shorter method will enable me to show that the authorities agree in holding the power to maintain its independence—not the close of efforts to subdue it—to be the condition upon which a neutral may acknowledge an insurgent. Sir James Mackintosh, in a celebrated speech of 1824, upon the South American Republics, insists with glowing approbation on the case of Portugal, which I have brought under the notice of your Lordships. He does not question, but applauds the conduct of the recognising Powers. He does not hold it up to be avoided as an error; but, on the contrary, to be regarded as a brilliant lesson in his day. And your Lordships well know that Sir James Mackintosh was the disciple, the exponent, the successor, and the equal of the great men who have moulded public law into a science. You well know that what he sanctions they have sanctioned, and that when he unreservedly subscribes to what Europe did in 1641, Europe must have acted on their principle. What is it? The principle appears to be that the hazard of reconquest is the only bar to acknowledgment, when such a measure is likely to accelerate a peace and benefit a country which extends it. Should the insurgent yield after the acknowledgment of neutrals, their judgment is rebuked, their action vain, and they have given useless umbrage to the Power ultimately dominant. But it is not correct, according to the law of nations and the history of the world, to aver that the struggle must be over, the last army routed, the last shilling spent, the last drop of blood exhausted, by the combatants. And it is not consistent with humanity. The vocation of acknowledgment is rather to preserve than to destroy, and by diplomacy to give a quicker passage to the end, which the long and sanguinary road of arms would ultimately point to. When you cannot advise the older State to persevere, when you denounce its efforts, and when you prophesy its failure; and when you cannot

recommend the younger State to yield, what can be more irrational or cruel than to prolong hostilities between them? But by the reservation of acknowledgment you do prolong hostilities between them. The effort to reconquer has never been renounced, and scarcely ever been suspended, until neutrals had acknowledged the insurgent, from the civil war between Switzerland and Austria in the Middle Ages down to that which stagnates at this moment. And such a general result is what the plainest reason would have led us to anticipate. While neutrals countenance his hopes, is the invading Power likely to recede from them? Can he proclaim, without suggestion, his defeat? Can he embrace, without authority, his own humiliation? Can he assure bystanders he has sunk, while they by silence loudly tell him he may rally? It is not therefore easy to defend the conduct of a neutral who indirectly calls out for battles, and imposes expeditions, with a foregone conclusion that they must be useless for their purpose. But it is said, may you acknowledge an insurgent destined to succeed, while hostile armies are encamped in portions of his territory? My Lords, if you may not, you should withdraw your representatives from any country which becomes the seat of war. We ought, at least, to have withdrawn our minister from Spain in 1823, when France, unfortunately, marched without resistance on its capital. In accordance, therefore, with experience, authorities, and reason, I submit to this House—you may acknowledge the insurgent as soon as no doubt remains upon the issue of the struggle.

And is the issue doubtful? The capitalists of London, Frankfort, Paris, Amsterdam, are not of that opinion. Within the last few days the Southern loan has reached the highest place in our market. £3,000,000 were required, £9,000,000 were subscribed for. The loan is based upon the security of cotton; and it has been well known for a twelvemonth that as far as the invaders march, that security

must perish. But what is the opinion of military men upon the issue? The Emperor of the French, having been brought up as a soldier—having given a long life to military science, and having recently commanded the greatest armies of the day at Solferino and Magenta—in the despatch of November last did not conceal from the Government of Washington that subjugation was impossible. The Princes of the House of Orleans, who served with General M'Clellan, are thought to have inspired the excellent account of the campaign which appeared on October 15th in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and which has also tended to disperse the vision of re-conquest. To the same scale of judgment General Scott appears, by recent revelations, to contribute. And this, too, is remarkable. Not one military person in the North is known to view re-conquest as attainable. Neither General M'Clellan, Burnside, Rosencrans, M'Dowell, Halleck, or Buell, have ever publicly declared, so far as it has reached us, that the object of the Government they serve under is feasible. The ignominious task of prophesying triumph has been wisely left to the voluminous despatch writer, who, whatever his accomplishments or merits, is no more qualified to judge the issue of campaigns than he is to guide the movements of battalions.* But, after all, it may be granted in the abstract, that reconquest is attainable. To genius nothing is denied. The only question it becomes the neutral Powers to consider is, can it be attained by Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues? It is by Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues, if at all, the South is to be conquered. There is not any person in their armies, such as Britain proudly watched in the Peninsula, able to control a Government behind, and overwhelm an enemy in front of him.† If there was, they would recall him. It is there-

* Mr. Seward.

† The late Duke of Wellington.

fore necessary to inquire what proof of its ability has this aggressive Cabinet developed. Is it in its choice of expeditions or of viceroys? Is it in appointing, superseding, or replacing the commanders it must lean on? Is it in their firm adherence to a principle? At one time they were opposed to the invasion they have plunged into. Is it in their conduct about slavery? At one time they boasted of their disposition to maintain it. Soon after, they desired the Border States to be delivered from it. After that emancipation was declared, but only in the States which were resisting them. The loyal region might preserve the institution—but seceders must renounce it. It ought to flourish where they reign;—but not to stand beyond the limits of their sovereignty. But next, a bankrupt treasury would buy it by an outlay equal to the public debt of our country. But, after all, a servile war was indispensable, and so were armies to enforce it. A servile war, however, was proclaimed. The proclamation cannot be considered as unprecedented. The model was before them. Lord of Nature, as he deemed himself, Xerxes ordered lashes to be given to the waves. Swelling with omnipotence, Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues dictate insurrection to the slaves of Alabama. Are these the movements of a Government by which the broken fragments of the Union can be welded, a mighty Continent subdued, 8,000,000 free men braced into an unit, robbed of home, of honour, and of liberty? But who are they arrayed against? The House ought not, indeed, to join in the encomiums on the Southern President, which heat and sympathy have prompted. As no one was deemed happy by the ancients until his life had closed, no one will be stamped as great by you until his enterprise has triumphed. But so much may be hazarded of this extraordinary person that, gifted amply by nature, he has made the union of political and military excellence his object; and that, as far as Europe has observed, in the midst of danger and of care such as few men have the

power to imagine, fewer to sustain, he has exhibited the patience and the enterprise, the ardour and the coolness, the heroism and urbanity, from which it generally happens that nations draw their birth and civil wars accept their destination. And this is most important to remember. If we look back to such conjunctures we do not find an instance in which ability and character have yielded to the want of both, no matter how well sustained the latter as regards forces, numbers, and revenue. The Roman Commonwealth, in spite of territory, population, armies, was destroyed from wanting any mind by which the mind of Cæsar could be balanced and encountered. Holland was lost to Spain when the Prince of Orange and Prince Maurice were superior to all the viceroys and the captains the mother country could oppose to them. Her South American dependencies were gone when she had no opponent of Bolivar. Your Lordships do not want to go back to the enlightened page of Davila or Sully, to remind you that the civil wars of France, after every kind of knot and of vicissitude, all closed in the pre-eminence of Henry IV. ; in head and heart the master of his epoch. The Carlists had not any match for Espartero. The Sardinians had not any equal of Radetzky. The same lesson is impressed on us by the unfortunate collision of Washington and George III. ;—of Charles I. and Cromwell. It is true, indeed, that history need not repeat itself, and that events are neither bound by theories or precedents. But such experience at least may forcibly suggest to us, that had a Southern subjugation belonged to the decrees of fate, an instrument more powerful than that of Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues would be seen conducing to the sentence. It is not going beyond the bounds of caution to allege that a new chapter will be opened in the annals of mankind, if on this unrivalled scene of grandeur and of conflict, the qualities which they regard with scorn are found triumphant over those which they agree to follow and to reverence. But, last of all, if Mr. Lincoln

and his colleagues could succeed against the leader and the armies which oppose them, could they succeed against their own consciousness—revealed to us by many signs—of incapacity to do so?

If noble Lords agree, therefore, with the financial world, with military men, and with the Government of Washington itself, that the issue is not doubtful, and if therefore Great Britain has the right to acknowledge Southern independence, why ought she to exercise it? The first answer is:—Because honour calls on her to do so, and it rests on a detail which may be rapidly presented to your Lordships. British Consuls have remained during the war at Mobile, Charleston, and Savannah. They are there for the protection of our subjects, who reside by thousands on the seaboard. In times like these their presence is essential. Were it not for Consuls to identify them, the severe enlistment laws of the Confederacy might at any time descend on our people; or in the sudden turns of war their goods might be destroyed without a clue to ownership or means of compensation. They are also there to witness the blockade, and to report upon its efficacy. And these Consuls draw their *exequaturs* from the Government of Washington. They are a standing derogation to the Power which receives, which shelters, and endures them. We are not inclined to withdraw them. We ought, therefore, to accredit them to the insurgent who permits them to reside. And if we do, he is acknowledged. Honour forbids nations, as it does men, to run up a score of gratitude themselves, and to create a fund of just resentment in its object. Honour forbids nations, as it does men, to offer insult at the moment they are profiting by favour. In one sense alone do the Confederacy gain by the arrangement. We give them all the grandeur of forbearance. They allow our Consuls to reside, and we withhold the recognition which public law entitles them to ask of us. But is not our aspect, with regard to them, a poor one? We deny

their rights over their territory, and yet at their hands receive the safety of our citizens. The Southern Congress is about to entertain the question of any longer tolerating our Consuls in this attitude. And what will be the situation of Great Britain, if led by-and-by to do, by interest and by convenience, what self-respect, and pride and justice dictate at this moment ?

The neutrality we vaunt is the next consideration, which, if fairly viewed, would lead Great Britain to the course I have adverted to. The noble Lord the Secretary of State, in his despatch to Mr. Mason, dated August 2, has pointed out that the great controversy on the right to secede, so long and frequently debated in America, cannot be resolved by foreign Governments. It is not for them to decide between the rival theories of Webster and Calhoun. They ought rather to reserve their judgment, considering the balance of the argument and the intricacy of the circumstances, than to pronounce in favour of secession or against it. But by withholding recognition when the issue no longer seems to be a doubtful one, when the danger of reconquest is not the restraining fact, Great Britain does pronounce against the title to secede, does stamp the Southern movement as illegal, does therefore part with the neutrality which orders silence on that question. On what other ground is she refusing to acknowledge ? And let your Lordships mark that by acknowledgment you do not for a moment stamp with your authority the claims of the insurgent—you give no verdict in his favour. If you did, the history of the world would have to be re-written. If you did, this country would never have been able to acknowledge the Revolutionary Government of France in February, 1848, which derived its short-lived power from neither throne, nor law, nor parliament, nor people—flung up by the delirium of Paris to sink at once with its repose, and no more to be regarded as the legal rulers of the country than the men in livery who cross the

stage to take away the furniture, between two acts of an eventful drama which absorbs us, can be mistaken for the heroes of the scene or owners of the theatre. Acknowledgment is not a tribute, therefore, to the rights of the insurgent. But when the hazard of reconquest is dismissed, it is a tribute to the rights of the invader to withhold it. We are now declaring on the question of a title to secede, on which the noble Lord himself, on which neutrality, forbids us to be umpires. But even if it did not, the Confederacy, as Mr. Davis, in his recent message, has perspicuously explained, have suffered wrongs—although not meant to injure—from Great Britain. Our Government, however conscientiously, held back the Emperor of the French from a proposal which might have eminently served them. With the best intentions and designs, they refused to allow the despatch of Mr. Mason, on acknowledgment in August, 1862, for over six months, to reach the eye and judgment of the country. By denying our harbours to both sides when both might have had access to them—no doubt from a laudable desire of tranquillity—it has compelled the Southerners to burn their prizes on the waters, has thus destroyed their chance of raising privateers, and vastly limited their powers of self-defence against the country which invades them. After inducing the Confederacy, by a transaction which I described a year ago, to pledge itself to the observance of certain rules laid down at Paris in 1856, the British Government has not been ready to maintain them on the vital point that blockades must be effective to be binding. But illustrations of the kind may be dismissed. Partiality to the United States has been avowed in a despatch of March 27, 1862, from the noble Lord to Mr. Adams, and which the Government of Washington have brought before the world in page 62 of the volume they have recently distributed. In resisting the extortionate demands which Mr. Adams had addressed to him, and which, indeed, he manfully exposes,

the noble Lord, as a set-off to his austerity, declares that allowance has been made for the difficulties which the United States had to contend with in the war, and that public law has been liberally interpreted in their favour. The book is here, if noble Lords desire to refer to it. Allowance has been made for the difficulties of the United States in a war which both humanity and policy forbade, and which their own aggressive faithlessness created. Public law has been interpreted, and liberally, in favour of a Government which supports the infamous M'Neil; lays waste the houses of distinguished adversaries in Virginia; which ruins havens in Savannah and in Charleston; which is ready to let loose 4,000,000 negroes on their compulsory owners, and to renew from sea to sea the horrors and the crimes of St. Domingo. But let it be so. I did not come here to impugn the decisions of the noble Lord. He is not called upon to vindicate them. I mention these unfavourable actions to the South, without a view to censure of the Government. The only inference I draw is, that, if neutrality directs us, they require an instant course of reparation and of balance. Acknowledgment is the only form in which Great Britain can propose, or in which the injured Power is willing to accept it.

But I will not pursue an argument, sufficient as it stands, and go on to the next consideration, which demands (and loudly) such a measure. It is our own security in Canada. A noble Earl who gained his laurels in the East,* well pointed out to us last Session, that whenever the war closed Canada would be endangered. If victorious, the Northern States might attack it in the drunkenness of pride; if defeated, in the bitterness of failure. Some men, out of doors have been so infatuated as to hold that by carefully abstaining from anything which gives umbrage to the

* The Earl of Ellenborough.

United States, we should defend it. As if aggressive Powers had ever been restrained, by wanting pretexts, from the wars they were inclined to. The security of Canada is quickly seen by your Lordships to reside in one circumstance alone—the danger of attacking it. That danger will at least be greater when the Southern Power is friendly to Great Britain than when it is estranged, inasmuch as the aggressive state will then have to contemplate the chance of an attack upon his rear, as well as the bombardment of his cities and destruction of his commerce. No doubt, Canada is safe while the civil war continues ; but we are neither able nor entitled to prolong it for her safety. The civil war may close after the acknowledgment of Southern independence by the Emperor, although Great Britain has not shared his manifesto. We may not be able much longer to keep back the virtue and humanity, as well as all the interests, the fears, and wants which tend to force the measure upon Europe. From the moment separation was inevitable, no statesman could be blind to our want of an ally on the other side of the Atlantic. The United States can never possibly become one, not only because they are embittered, or because our interests are clashing, or because our institutions are repugnant, or because a rivalry is forced upon us in manufactures, and in ships, but because no alliance has ever yet occurred between the mother country and the Power who had violently broken from it. The friendly disposition of the South is therefore necessary to us. It is attainable. And if we wantonly forego it ; if we allow the war to close before we have acknowledged, both the separated Powers being irrevocably hostile to us, we may be forced, now to guard Canada from one, now the West Indies from the other. Our diplomatists, moreover, would have no influence or voice in the Confederacy, whether they attempted to soften the resentments which the war had left behind it, to gain legitimate advantages in trade, to deprecate

aggressive views, or to improve the situation of the negro. But on this point noble Lords who have been our representatives abroad have the materials of thinking far more strongly than myself in the direction I have pointed to.

Dismissing policy, I need touch but briefly on the moral obligation to acknowledge, because, on grounds already stated, it applies generally to the case of neutrals and insurgents, when the hazard of reconquest is exhausted. It arises from the circumstance adverted to before, that in the civil wars of Europe, since the time of Charles V. (and to these may be added that of the Swiss Cantons and the House of Austria in the Middle Ages), the acknowledgment of neutrals has preceded the conclusion of hostilities; and while that preface is withheld, that close is not to be anticipated. It is only requisite to glance at the special circumstances which enhance an abstract duty as regards Great Britain and the war which is before us. The first and most striking is the Lancashire distress, which is not likely to pass off until cotton falls in price, and rise in abundance. And that can hardly be expected to occur until the war is over. No man, conversant with political economy, supposes that cotton crops will start into existence in other portions of the world, while an avalanche of 4,000,000 bales impends upon the market from America. But that it does so, our Consuls in the South, Mr Bunch and Mr. Molyneux, have recently informed us in public letters, known to all the trading world. The impression that the price will be depressed during the existence of the war is strengthened by what has fallen from Mr. Bazley, Mr. Bright, Mr. Mangles, and Mr. Laing, the highest practical authorities, who have all addressed the public on the topic. Another special circumstance is, that the present war—waged between descendants of Great Britain—appears to be unequalled in the records of the annalist, or the conceptions of the poet, for the masses exposed to death, the area through which the carnage is

extended, the amount of families divided and bereaved, the bitter and relentless passions which exasperate the combatants. Beyond this, the Government of Washington are more incapable of making peace spontaneously than any other which has ever grappled with insurgents, considering the pledges they have made, the debts they have incurred, the hosts they have annihilated. As well might you require a man to perform a useful amputation on himself against the influence of others, as expect that Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues can terminate the war against the South, whilst Europe still excludes it from the family of nations. The duty to give the strife a possibility of closing, is heightened by the fact that they appear to be pursuing it in the midst of well-founded despair, and under a necessity which only neutrals can annihilate. That they are doing so will appear to those who watch the tone of Mr. Greely in *The New York Tribune*, who observe the desperate expedient of enlisting negro regiments, and who reflect that West Virginia would be useless as a State unless the two belligerents were separated. But let any one recall the past, and reason for a moment on this question. Would Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues have embarked upon the war had they foreseen the tenor of its history? If, on the eve of crossing the Potomac, a higher Power had revealed to them the panorama of disaster and disgrace which they were doomed to bring upon their country ; the panic of Bull Run ; the scared and broken columns falling into Washington ; the long and dreary autumn of paralysis which followed ; the victories which took away the hope of any Southern party for the Union, and which as loudly as defeats proclaimed the madness of their enterprise ; the cotton blazing on the Mississippi as they reached it ; the capture of New Orleans without a practical result beyond the indignation of the world at the revolting tyranny which held it ; had they caught a glimpse of the engagements which drove General M'Clellan to his gunboats

—the scions of a Royal house partaking his confusion—and seen the tide of war rolled back upon their territory; and then another host sent out to dissolve itself, to put an end to the anxiety of Richmond, and to perform the tragedy of Fredericksburg; and, last of all, had they been able to forecast, with eighteen vessels hot in their pursuit, the Southern cruisers roaming on the sea triumphant and implacable;—would they have been deaf to the commissioners in the spring of 1861? would they have scorned a peace? would they have sent their expedition to Fort Sumter? would they have trampled on the law to plunge into hostilities? Then, are they not reluctantly pursuing them without a choice, till neutrals have acknowledged the insurgent? Shall Europe any longer chain them to the effort? Or, rather, when the Emperor desires to release, ought we to keep them inert and helpless victims on the lake of fire their blunders have created?

My Lords, these grand considerations of honour, of neutrality, of policy, and duty, would lead the people of the country to require an acknowledgment of Southern independence, were it not for the delusions as to slavery, which for a month or two, have been promoted, and which, unless I am enabled to confront, I should seem, perhaps, to have avoided. To confront, is to expose them. And the shortest method which occurs to me, is at once to drive these puny agitators to an issue. They have deceived the working classes of the country by confounding questions about slavery, which ought not to be discussed, with the only one which it behoves the British public to consider. We may go on eternally debating whether the desire to extend and to preserve it was at the bottom of secession; whether the desire to abridge or to eradicate it was at the bottom of invasion. These points, involving the recesses of the human heart, are little known even in America. History may discuss. Omniscience only can determine them. And it is

idle mockery to force them on a mass of operatives, divided by 3,000 miles from any clue to the inquiry. The legitimate, the only issue is (and they will not venture to deny it), whether separation or reconquest will be most conducive to the welfare of the negro; the prosperity of Africa, and the attainment of the objects which have long engaged the Buxtons, and the Wilberforces, and other admirable men who scorn to be connected with this diminutive machinery for prolonging war on one side of the ocean, by spreading fiction on the other. We should therefore trace—and it is quickly done—the natural results of the alternatives. In the event of separation there will no longer be the possibility of extending negro bondage into territories in which it does not now exist. Already it is settled in New Mexico. And no boundary you can well conceive will give the Southern States uncultivated land beyond that Northern limit. In the event of separation, the North will not return the negro fugitives who cross over its border. And the planter must retain them, not by law and terror, but by judgment and humanity. There will be a premium on benevolence, a penalty on inattention and injustice, which has not heretofore existed. Slaves will be contented, or escape. Under the Union they found a prison in a continent. In the event of separation, the whole question of black labour may be impartially considered by the Southerners. Whereas, during the last decade, the violence of Northern Abolitionists had fixed the system, had inflamed into a point of honour, or a passion, the opinions against which they were crusaders. In what manner would reconquest operate upon the negro? A servile war would be its melancholy preface, in which murder confronts the slave, and rapine the proprietor. In such a conflict, many blacks must be exterminated, and nearly all the higher classes driven from the country. The dismantled houses and the confiscated fields become the property of Northerners. The

conquerors at once discover that the soil is worthless unless the labour of the black may be applied to it. The negroes who survive, demoralised and scattered, will not be all of them recaptured; and if they were, would be inadequate in number to the purpose. How are the new proprietors, desiring wealth and jealous of sterility, to find the labour which is wanting to them? Africa is open. Africa contains the millions they are seeking. The flag of the United States before now has unfortunately been a shelter to the slave trade. The want of the United States may prove its resurrection in America. And this, too, is unanswerable. During the last few years, while the Union went on undivided, the efforts of Great Britain on the subject were defeated. As soon as ever the civil war divided it, the Government of Washington conceded the right of search; while their organs insolently told us that it would be withdrawn as soon as Southern subjugation was accomplished. After this, what man can be so mad as to declare that the friends of Africa and of her race ought to concur with the invaders and advance pleas in their behalf, which they themselves have not the forehead to resort to?

The only further sentiment which, in the event of other neutrals being prepared, might indispose the country to acknowledgment, is a lingering idea that the cause of freedom is involved in the retention of the Union. It is just, therefore, to inquire for whose advantage it would come again into existence. We have seen it would not be for that of Africa or the negro. It could not be for that of the seceders, as the miseries of New Orleans have explained, where that rule has been established, and those terrors have been felt, which would then apply to all the cities of their territory. Who says they ought not to perish rather than submit to a yoke more bitter and degrading than was ever known yet in Warsaw or in Venice? But language shrinks from such a topic. Then, would it be restored for the advantage of the

North? At least they can only gain their object, if it is attainable, through the medium of a general who, when he had attained it, must rank among the highest conquerors—with Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon. Would such a character be likely to resign his arms to Mr. Lincoln and his colleagues? What temptation could he have to conduct so derogatory and to sacrifice so thankless? It was thought by many that General M'Clellan, at the time of his dismissal, might have turned his regiments on the capital with safety. And there were not wanting those who loudly censured his forbearance. In this war there has been no fact more pregnant and instructive than the disposition, in spite of his reverses, to exalt him. For many months a halo has surrounded his inaction. Would the army, then, refuse to follow one who had performed marvels instead of shrinking before obstacles; who had given them the plunder of the south instead of leading them through hardships and privations to their starting-point; who had won affection, not by his designs and his retreats, but by his actions and his progress; whose title rested on the fact, not that Baltimore was safe, but that Montgomery had fallen. A tide of arguments would rush into the mind of such a general, to dissuade him from surrendering his power to institutions so discredited, so trampled on, and so remote from those which Washington bequeathed, as he would find subsisting in his country. But the impulse from within would be exceeded by the pressure from without. In a sickened and disorganised society, which only pants for rule, he would not choose but to be coerced into the part of a dictator. And is it for a despotism that the people of the North are pouring out their blood, and tarnishing their glory? Already it exists. It had its birth in war, and it would take its immortality from conquest. Then, would the Union be restored for the advantage of the world? What country would be safer? Would Brazil? What country would be freer?

Would Poland gain, when the only patron of the Czar recovered his original dimensions? At first, indeed—for facts will ever guide the calculation of your Lordships—the necessity of Southern garrisons might tend to keep them in repose. But in a few years—they do not labour to conceal it from us—a power more rapacious, more unprincipled, more arrogant, more selfish and encroaching, would arise than has ever yet increased the outlay, multiplied the fears, and compromised the general tranquillity of Europe. And on this overgrown, on this portentous form of tyranny and egotism, many countries would depend for the material of that important industry which languishes at present.

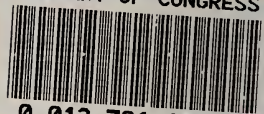
My Lords, the latter point might be explained by statistics I have with me.* But it will hardly be impugned, and it is more important to remind you, that not much more than five years have elapsed since France and Great Britain were united to withstand a Power which overshadowed and assailed the general security of nations. To gain their object, it was requisite to interrupt a peace of forty years, and squander noble lives upon the trenches and the battlefield. In order now to reach equivalent results and parallel advantages, they are required not to lavish, but to save; not to arm battalions, but disperse them; not to open conflict in the world, but snatch an hemisphere from misery. What in Russia wanted toil, outlay, unmeasured risks, and endless combinations, for ought we know may be accomplished by a fiat in America. And the presence of a noble Duke upon the bench,† might have suggested to me that there are some inherent evils in the partnership of arms which have not any place in the alliance of diplomacy. The initiative will belong to France. But if it did not, should

* Showing the conditions upon which it would alone be possible to replace the cotton of America in other portions of the world.

† The Duke of Newcastle.

Great Britain be ashamed of it? Whoever contemplates habitually her place or aspect on the globe, will sometimes think that it imposes a double task on her career; to urge on civilisation from its Eastern cradle to its Western home, and also as the firm and watching outpost of the sea, to stand between the older States and the evils which the other side of the Atlantic may occasionally threaten. Long has she fulfilled the first, and nobly may she now sustain the second part of the vocation which belongs to her. And if it suits the dignity of empire to compass large results by trifling exertions—instead of wasting giant means upon invisible achievements—the day will be a proud one, when, in a voice which Europe has re-echoed, her message rolls over the waters; to guard the freedom of the Old World, and limit, if not arrest, the sorrows of the New. But whether we resolve to lead or hesitate to follow, whether we retard, or join, or suffer isolation from the Continent, I shall be indebted to your Lordships for permitting me to show to-night that the Neutral Powers have a sacred title to acknowledge the Confederacy, and that—according to the only lights their rulers are possessed of—until that title is asserted, the war can never end.

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